

Message Text

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11

ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 AF-06 EUR-12 ISO-00 IO-10 CIAE-00 DODE-00

PM-04 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01

SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 SAM-01 DHA-02 ORM-02 /090 W

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P R 201110Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY RABAT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7017

INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

AMEMBASSY DAKAR

AMEMBASSY MADRID

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

AMEMBASSY TUNIS

AMCONSUL CASABLANCA

AMCONSUL TANGIER

USMISSION USUN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY TEHRAN

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

C O N F I D E N T I A L RABAT 5628

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PBOR, MO, SP, SS

SUBJECT: SAHARA ROUNDUP

1. SAHARA THEME DOMINATES NATIONAL DAY FESTIVITIES. KING
REVIEWED NATIONAL DAY PARADE NOVEMBER 18 WITH SPANISH ARMED
FORCES CHIEF OF STATE GENERAL VALLESPINE SITTING NEXT TO HIM ON THE
REVIEWING STAND. VALLESPINE, WHO WAS SENT HERE TO REPRESENT
GOS AT NATIONAL DAY, WAS GIVEN SUPER-VIP TREATMENT. OTHER
SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVES SENT FOR OCCASION WERE, IN ROUGH ORDER
OF THEIR IMPORTANCE IN GOM MEDIA EXPOSURE, TUNISIAN MINISTER
OF DEFENSE, SENEGALESE DEFENSE MINISTRY OFFICIAL ALIOUNE
BADARAKONTE, IVORIAN MINISTER OF STATE LOUA DIOMANDE, AND
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REPRESENTATIVES FROM MAURITANIA, IRAN, AND JORDAN. ALSO

CONSPICUOUSLY PRESENT WAS SAHARA TERRITORIAL PRESIDENT JOUMANI, WHO STILL HAD NOT LEFT FOR UN AS OF AFTERNOON NOVEMBER 18 (RABAT 5598)

IN BRIEF ORDER OF THE DAY REMARKS TO MOROCCAN ARMED FORCES, KING AGAIN HIGHLIGHTED "RETURN" OF SAHARA. KING DID NOT AWARD ANY MILITARY PROMOTIONS, AS SOME HAD SPECULATED, BUT DID DECORATE SOME OF HIS TROOPS.

2. MOROCCAN-SOVIET CHILL. OBSERVERS OF PARADE WERE STRUCK BY CONSCIOUS COLD-SHOULDERING GIVEN SOVIET MILITARY ATTACHES AT GOM-SPONSORED LUNCH FOLLOWING PARADE: THE SOVIETS ATE ALONE IN CROWDED DINING ROOM. HOWEVER, SOVIETS RECEIVED UNEXPECTED SUPPORT IN NOVEMBER 17 AL MOUHARIR (USFP) EDITORIAL. ARTICLE CREDITED SOVIET UN PERM REP MALIK WITH REFUSING ALGERIAN REQUEST TO HOLD SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING TO STUDY SAHARA QUESTION. AL MUHARRIR SAID THIS SHOWS INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGING IN MOROCCO'S FAVOR WHEN COUNTRY LIKE USSR, WHICH PREVIOUSLY HAD TAKEN "NEUTRAL" POSITIONS, NOW COMING AROUND. MEANWHILE, MOROCCAN COMMUNIST PARTY CHIEF ALI YATA HAS GONE TO ISCOV FOR "POLITICAL" DISCUSSIONS. YATA LIKELY TO BE ATTEMPTING MEND FENCES, AND WHILE HE PROBABLY HAD KING'S APPROVAL FOR TRIP, IT UNCLEAR WHETHER KING GAVE HIM ANY PERSONAL MESSAGE TO TAKE ALONG.

3. FURTHER THOUGHTS ON KING'S NOVEMBER 17 SPEECH (SEE RABAT 5600) KING IN HIS SPEECH LEFT STATUS OF MARCHERS OBSCURE. HOWEVER, NOVEMBER 20 BOTH AL MUHARRIR AND L'OPINION (ISTIQLAL) SAID SOME OF VOLUNTEER CONTINGENTS HAD BEGUN TO RETURN HOME. IT WAS PERHAPS ALSO NOTEWORTHY THAT KING SINGLED OUT FOR PRAISE PRIME MINISTER OSMAN WHO WAS HIGHLY ACTIVE IN MARCH PREPARATIONS AND ACTUALLY LED MARCHERS ACROSS BORDER. IT WAS ALSO OSMAN WHO LED GOM NEGOTIATING TEAM IN LAST ROUND IN MADRID NEGOTIATIONS.

4. ANOTHER POSSIBLY SIGNIFICANT ITEM IN KING'S SPEECH WAS HIS PROMISE TO INCREASE DEFENSE EXPENDITURES. ALTHOUGH MADE IN CONTEXT OF PROMISE TO INCREASE SAHARA DEVELOPMENT EFFORTS, REMARK SEEMS TO INDICATE KING'S INTENTION INCREASE OVERALL DEFENSE EXPENDITURES AS RELATIONS WITH ALGERIA CONTINUE TO BE UNSATISFACTORY. MEANWHILE KING, IN KEEPING WITH CURRENT GOM POLICY, CONTINUED TO IGNORE EXISTENCE AND/OR CLAIMS OF F POLISARIO.
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5. MADRID AGREEMENT. AMBASSADOR ATTENDED NOVEMBER 19 LUNCHEON GIVEN BY PRIMIN OSMAN, PRESENT AT WHICH WERE SENIOR GOM OFFICIALS AND SPANISH AMBASSADOR. GENERAL THEME OF CONVERSATIONS WAS ONE OF SATISFACTION OVER MADRID AGREEMENT BUT RECOGNITION THAT MORE REMAINED TO BE DONE. IN THIS CONNECTION, GOM PHOSPHATE CHIEF KARIM LAMRANI WILL BE RETURNING TO MADRID LATER THIS WEEK AND SPANISH AMBASSADOR IS RETURNING TO MADRID NOVEMBER 20.

SPANISH EMBOFF TOLD EMBOFF NOV. 18 THAT SEVERAL HIGH-LEVEL SPANISH OFFICIALS EXPECTED HERE OVER NEXT FEW DAYS TO DISCUSS AGREEMENTS.

6. GOM CONTINUED MAINTAIN FIG LEAF ON DETAILS OF ACCORDS, BUT KING SCHEDULED GIVE PRESS CONFERENCE NOV. 25 AND WILL PROBABLY USE OCCASION TO REVEAL SOME SUBSTANCE. NOVEMBER 19 SEMI-OFFICIAL LE MATIN AND MAROC SOIR BOTH CARRIED AFP REPORT ON FRONT PAGE WHICH STATED THAT TRANSFER OF SOVEREIGNTY TO MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA "MIGHT" COMMENCE ON 1 DECEMBER. ARTICLE STATED THAT ONCE SPANISH FORCES DEPART, MOROCCO AND MAURITANIA WILL HOLD SAHARAN REFERENDUM. ARTICLE NOTED EXISTENCE OF THOUSANDS OF SAHARAN REFUGEES IN NEIGHBORING COUNTRIES AND QUOTED SOURCES AS SAYING THAT SEVERAL THOUSAND SAHARANS NOW IN SOUTHERN MOROCCO WILL RETURN TO SAHARA TO PARTICIPATE IN SUCH POLLING. NOV 20 L'OPINION ARTICLE QUOTED "RELIABLE SOURCE" FROM MADRID SAYING THAT GOS HAS BEGUN TO UNDERTAKE "VIGOROUS MEASURES" IN AL AYOUN TO NEUTRALIZE F POLISARIO EFFORTS UPSET ACCORDS.

7. OPPOSITION REACTION. OPPOSITION PRESS CONTINUES CAUTIOUS BUT GENERALLY APPROVING TONE. STICKY SUBJECTS OF CEUTA AND MELLILA AND SHARING OF SAHARA WEALTH STILL LACKING EDITORIAL COMMENT. ISTIQLAL'S AL ALAM IN NOV. 19 EDITORIAL CAUTIONS AGAINST "NEW IMPERIALISTS" WHO ATTEMPTING OCCUPY SAHARA. EDITORIAL SAID NEGOTIATIONS NOT ENOUGH TO PRESERVE SAHARA, THAT ARMY WOULD ALSO BE NEEDED. AL MOUHARRIR, IN ITS NOV. 19 EDITORIAL, SAID THAT "PLOTS" WHICH WILL BE INTRODUCED INSIDE FOURTH COMMITTEE AND SUBSEQUENTLY IN UNGA WILL HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH FINAL RESOLUTION TO SAHARA SINCE IT WILL BE POSITIVE ACTION INSIDE SAHARA WHICH WILL COUNT. ON NOVEMBER 16, AL MOUHARRIR PUBLISHED EDITORIAL WARNING THAT FINAL SOLUTION TO PROBLEMS IN AREA WILL HAVE TO

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INVOLVE JOINT EXPLOITATION TINDOUF IRON MINES. SAID ALGERIA MUST "THINK DEEPLY" AND "LOOK TO FUTURE" TO DETERMINE WHETHER AREA WILL BE ONE OF COOPERATION OR ONE OF STRUGGLE AND CONFRONTATION.

10. COMMENT. OPTIMISM CONTINUES HIGH HERE, BUT THERE IS DISTINCT REFRAINING FROM CROWING AS BOTH ONGOING NEGOTIATIONS WITH SPAIN AND UPCOMING UN DELIBERATIONS IMPOSE CONSTRAINTS.
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